

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-11

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS STATE 152031

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: USIRJC, IR

SUBJECT: US-IRAN JOINT COMMISSION: STATUS REPORT

REF: TEHRAN 4897

1. A REVIEW SESSION WAS HELD JUNE 8, AT THE DEPARTMENT AT WHICH COMMISSION COORDINATORS PRESENTED STATUS REPORTS ON THEIR RESPECTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES. REPORTS WERE DELIVERED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ECONOMY AND FINANCE, AGRICULTURE, MANPOWER AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEES. REPORTS ON RDP AND BUSINESS COUNCIL ACTIVITIES UNCLASSIFIED

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WERE ALSO PRESENTED. FOLLOWING IS A RUN DOWN ON MAIN ACTIVITIES IN EACH COMMITTEE:

2. ECONOMY AND FINANCE: THE MOST DIVERSE OF THE COMMITTEES, ECONOMY AND FINANCE, REPORTED PROGRESS IN THE AREAS OF TRADE, HOUSING AND MEDICINE. THE TRADE SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTED THAT, FOLLOWING TWO YEARS OF A SLOW DECLINE, U.S. EXPORTS TO IRAN FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY-APRIL 1978 SHOWED A 47 PERCENT INCREASE, AMOUNTING TO DOLS 1.2 BILLION RELATIVE TO 1977 FIGURES FOR THE SAME FOUR MONTHS.

(FYI WE HOPE TO HAVE A BREAKDOWN ON THESE FIGURES WHICH WILL BE POUCHED TO POST. END FYI) SIMILARLY, U.S. 1978 IMPORTS FROM IRAN HAVE RISEN 17 PERCENT FROM THEIR 1977 LEVEL, TOTALING DOLS 1.0 BILLION. THE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTED THAT U.S. EXPORTS COULD BE AUGMENTED FURTHER BY THE IMPORT-EXPORT BANK'S ACCELERATED FINANCING ACTIVITY IN IRAN. (IT WAS NOTED THAT A PC FOR FIVE 747'S FOR IRAN AIR IS UNDER CONSIDERATION.) BANK OFFICIALS WILL VISIT IRAN LATER THIS MONTH TO INVESTIGATE ADDITIONAL PROJECTS. ALSO NOTED WAS THE U.S. COMMERCE DEPARTMENT'S APPROVAL OF EXPORT LICENSES TO IRAN. THE EXPORT LICENSE WILL ENABLE IRANIAN PURCHASES OF ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS AND PLANT EQUIPMENT AND THUS FURTHER IRAN'S AIM TO EXPAND ITS ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY. ACTION REQUESTED: WE ARE STILL AWAITING A REPORT ON THE IRAN ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY WHICH WAS DISCUSSED AT THE JOINT COMMISSION MEETINGS.

3. THE IRANIANS APPEAR SIMILARLY RESPONSIVE TO THE HITHERTO UNSUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL OF A DOUBLE TAXATION TREATY. DISCUSSIONS REGARDING THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT WILL ENSUE AFTER THE SUBMISSION OF GOI REVISIONS IN ITS TAX CODE TO PARLIAMENT. ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR READING AS TO WHEN DISCUSSIONS ON A UNCLASSIFIED

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POSSIBLE TREATY MAY GET UNDER WAY.

4. THE TRADE SUBCOMMITTEE ALSO REPORTED THAT U.S. CUSTOMS OFFICIALS ARE INTERESTED IN OFFERING THE IRANIAN CUSTOMS AUTHORITY REIMBURSABLE ASSISTANCE IN THE AREAS OF TRAINING, COMMUNICATIONS, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER, AIRPORT AND SEAPORT CONTROLS AND CLEARANCE PROCEDURES. A U.S. CUSTOMS OFFICIAL TENTATIVELY PLANS TO VISIT IRAN THE SECOND WEEK IN JULY IN ORDER TO INITIATE DISCUSSIONS. RDP FUNDING MAY BE INVOLVED.

5. THE HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTED THAT THE U.S. FDA HAS PROVIDED THE IRANIANS WITH ITS TELEX NUMBER TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN FOOD AND DRUG OFFICIALS FROM THE TWO COUNTRIES. WITH REGARD TO THE BILATERAL SOCIAL SECURITY AGREEMENT, A SCHEDULE FOR NEGOTIATIONS IS BEING DRAWN UP BY THE U.S. SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION. AGREEMENT ON THIS ISSUE WILL RECTIFY THE DOUBLE PENSION PAYMENTS SITUATION. ACTION REQUESTED: WE NEED AN UPDATE ON IRANIAN VIEWS RE POSSIBLE TREATY.

6. THE FOLLOW-UP MEETING ON COOPERATION IN IMPLEMENTING IRAN'S IMPERIAL MEDICAL CENTER IS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 6-7 IN WASHINGTON. ARRANGMENTS ARE UNDERWAY FOR DISCUSSIONS IN RESEARCH, TRAINING, PROCUREMENT AND HEALTH CARE. THE IRANIAN DELEGATION, HEADED BY DR. SAMII, PRESIDENT OF THE IMPERIAL MEDICAL CENTER, WILL MEET WITH TOP LEVEL U.S.

OFFICIALS FROM BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTH AND COMMERCIAL INSTITUTIONS. THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE IS COORDINATING THIS PROGRAM.

7. IN THE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE, IT WAS NOTED THAT THE IRANIANS ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE RESIDENTIAL APPLICATIONS OF SOLAR ENERGY. THE IRANIANS DEMONSTRATED

THIS INTEREST AT THE SOLAR ENERGY EXHIBITION AND SEMINAR
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HELD IN TEHRAN IN MAY. ALSO REPORTED WAS THE AWARDING OF A DOLS 140 MILLION HOUSING PROJECT TO NATIONAL HOMES OF LAFAYETTE, INDIANA AND TO MEMCO, A SWISS-U.S. CONSORTIUM. THE TWO COMPANIES WILL PARTICIPATE IN IRAN'S PETRO-CHEMICAL COMPANY HOUSING PROJECT AT BANDAR SHAPUR. AT THE REQUEST OF THE IRANIANS, HUD IS SENDING HOUSING MATERIALS TO IRAN AND HAS OFFERED TO HOLD A SEMINAR ON HOUSING FINANCE FOR IRAN'S HOUSING OFFICIALS. FURTHER PROGRESS NOW AWAITS IRANIAN INITIATIVE.

8. THE TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS LITTLE DEVELOPMENT, OUTSIDE OF THE RECENT VISIT BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVENPORT.

9. THE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE REPORTED ON THE SUCCESS OF THE LAST MEETING IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF CONCRETE PROPOSALS DISCUSSED. A NEW PROJECT COOPERATION AGREEMENT IS NEARLY COMPLETE; ONE LAST POINT NEEDS TO BE RESOLVED REGARDING THE DOLLAR TRUST ACCOUNT. IN THE FIELD OF ANIMAL HEALTH, IRANIANS ARE CALLING FOR TWO U.S. RESIDENT VETERINARIANS TO WORK WITH FOURTEEN IRANIANS IN A GOI-FUNDED OPERATION THAT IS EXPECTED TO EXPAND WITHIN A YEAR TO INCLUDE FOUR RESIDENT VETERINARIANS. IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, THE IRANIANS HAVE REQUESTED VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND TWELVE PRINCIPALS BY SEPTEMBER 3 FOR A TRAINING PROGRAM TO BE HELD IN NEW MEXICO. OTHER TRAINING PROGRAMS IN PROGRESS ARE USDA-DIRECTED PROGRAMS ON FIRE MANAGEMENT AND FIRE MACHINERY; SOYA AND COTTON PRODUCTION; DRY FARMING AND CATTLE BREEDING; AND PLANT QUARANTINE. FEASIBILITY STUDIES OF SPECIFIC PROJECTS IN IRAN ARE BEING ARRANGED BETWEEN U.S. AGENCIES AND THE IRANIAN PRIVATE SECTOR. A LONG TERM PROJECT CURRENTLY IN THE
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PLANNING STAGE CONCERNS DATA COLLECTION AND REMOTE SENSING IN SOIL MAPPING. THE PROJECT IS AN EXPENSIVE ONE IN LIGHT OF THE SATELLITE INVESTMENT AND COMPUTER PROGRAMMING INVOLVED.

10. ACCORDING TO THE COMMITTEE ON MANPOWER AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION REPORT, THERE HAVE BEEN DEVELOPMENTS IN PLANS TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY CENTER, TEN SPECIALIZED VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTERS AND A MANPOWER DATA PROCESSING CENTER. FUTURE REPORTS ARE LIKELY, FOLLOWING THE VISIT OF DOL'S ASSOCIATE DEPUTY UNDER

SECRETARY DARWIN BELL.

11. IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND EDUCATION, THE RECENT IRANIAN REQUEST FOR FIVE SENIOR MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO VISIT U.S. FACILITIES WAS DISCUSSED. THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION IN HEW HAS BEEN ALERTED TO THIS AND WILL BE COORDINATING A PROGRAM. AN ARID LAND SCIENCE WORKSHOP IS READY TO PROCEED PENDING A GOI RESPONSE FOLLOWING THE NSF VISIT TO

TEHRAN IN MARCH. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE ADVISE WHETHER GOI PLANS HAVE MOVED AHEAD ON THIS. NSF NEEDS REPLY SOONEST. IN OCEANOGRAPHY, OES HAS ACTION ON A RECENT REQUEST BY THE IRANIANS FOR MEETINGS WITH U.S. OFFICIALS. ARRANGEMENTS ARE UNDERWAY. THE IRANIAN DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, MR. FEYLI, PAID A USEFUL VISIT TO NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON LAST WEEK. AN EXPANSION OF THE EPA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, POSSIBLY USING RDP FUNDS, WAS A KEY ITEM OF DISCUSSION. THE U.S. COORDINATOR ALSO NOTED USG INTEREST IN WORKING WITH THE GOI IN EARTHQUAKE EFFECTS MITIGATION RESEARCH. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY SHOULD REITERATE OUR INTEREST IN THIS ACTIVITY TO DR. PARSA AND ATTEMPT TO EXPLORE WAYS THAT INITIAL STEPS MIGHT BE TAKEN.
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12. ENERGY: AS POST IS AWARE, DOE IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON SOLAR COMMERCIALIZATION PROGRAM FOR SEVERAL COUNTRIES INCLUDING IRAN. OUTSIDE OF THAT, CHIEF ACTIVITY IS TRAINING PROGRAM FOR IRANIAN NUCLEAR SCIENTISTS AT OAK RIDGE FACILITIES.

13. US-IRAN BUSINESS COUNCIL: PREPARATIONS FOR COUNCIL'S NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SESSION IN LONDON ARE UNDERWAY. ACCORDING TO COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, DRAFT OF INVESTMENT PAPER IS STILL NOT COMPLETED.

14. RDP: REPRESENTATIVES FROM THIS OFFICE REPORTED THAT AID HAS DOLS 3 MILLION FOR WORLDWIDE REIMBURSABLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. IRAN IS A LEADING CANDIDATE FOR SOME OF THIS "SEED MONEY". RDP FUNDING, IN ADDITION TO ACTIVITIES ALREADY MENTIONED, IS CONTEMPLATED FOR THE MAHAB REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION.

15. COMMENT: IN GENERAL, ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE INTEREST, INITIATIVE AND FOLLOW-UP ON THE PART OF THE GOI. WASHINGTON COORDINATORS FELT THAT THE

IRANIAN GOVERNMENT IS MORE SERIOUS IN MAINTAINING MOMENTUM IN JOINT COMMISSION. ONE PROBLEM AREA IS ENERGY COMMITTEE. FROM OUR END, IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE WHO IN GOI HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR COORDINATING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES. TEHRAN'S COMMENTS ON HOW WE CAN ENERGIZE THIS COMMITTEE WOULD BE APPRECIATED. FYI. DEPENDING ON PACE OF EVENTS, WE WILL PROBABLY HOLD A SIMILAR REVIEW SESSION AT THE END OF THE YEAR. END FYI.
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